

FILLMORE STUDY BIBLE

Peter's First Letter

Metaphysically Interpreted



FILLMORE BIBLE SOCIETY

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Front cover image: Execution of Ignatius of Antioch, reputed to have been killed in Rome under the emperor Trajan, depicted in the Menologion of Basil II, an illuminated manuscript prepared for the emperor Basil II in c. 1000. Public Domain.

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The Fillmore Bible Society

The Fillmore Bible Society are collaborators who comb through dozens of metaphysical books written by Charles Fillmore and his students as well as over 70 years of Fillmore articles and sermons for metaphysical insights into the Bible. They edit and submit these insights as short annotations which are then applied to the text of the text of the World English Bible, a contemporary-language update of the American Standard Version of the Bible, both online and in print.

This collaboration project is managed by TruthUnity Ministries, which is the publisher of The Fillmore Study Bible. In time the Fillmore Bible Society will become free-standing with its own board, Editorial staff and peer-review committee.

Members of the Fillmore Bible Society include:



Rev. Dan Beckett. Mark, Colossians.



Thomas Scheinler. Acts, Galatians.



Rev. Lisa Herklotz and Rev Jim Ernstsén.
Revelation to John.



Susan St John. Hebrews.



Rev. Mark Hicks. General Editor. John,
Acts, Romans, Corinthians 1.



Rev. Michelle Vargas. Luke.



Mary Salama. Matthew, Corinthians 2,
Thessalonians 1 & 2, Timothy 1 & 2,
Titus, Peter 1 & 2, Jude.

The Fillmore Study Bible

The Fillmore Study Bible provides the reader with an introduction to metaphysical Bible interpretation by offering annotations and commentary from the works of Charles Fillmore and his students. Many Bible students learn their theology by reading the annotations and commentary of study Bibles. Study Bibles have a theological point of view, typically Catholic, Evangelical or Mainline Protestant. The Fillmore Study Bible makes this method of study available to the Metaphysical Christian.

Metaphysical Christianity is an authentic and distinct expression of the historic Christian faith that acknowledges and embraces the influence of Platonic and Stoic Greek philosophy in the early development of Christian theology. Much of this influence has been suppressed in orthodox Bible commentaries because metaphysical interpretation relies on an inner knowingness as authority for spiritual matters. The annotations included here embrace inner knowingness as authority.

This study bible uses the *World English Bible* translation, which is a contemporary-language update of the bible used by Charles Fillmore, the American Standard Version. The language

of the WEB is not American nor British, but *contemporary, world* English, making the text pleasant to read for the broadest possible audience of global English speakers. The WEB differs from several contemporary-language translations by not adopting gender neutral language but it has provided footnotes when gender neutral language would be appropriate.

We believe that our present day culture of information, science and technology is ready to restore to it's spiritual teachings the perspectives of original thinkers who gave us not only mathematics, ethics, democracy and medicine, but also deep insights into the inner world of soul and Divine mind—the Greek metaphysicians. We also believe that contemporary Christianity needs a contemporary, global interpretation applied to a contemporary, global biblical text. The Fillmore Study Bible is our offering for addressing these spiritual needs.

PETER'S FIRST LETTER



Execution of Ignatius of Antioch, reputed to have been killed in Rome under the emperor Trajan, depicted in the Menologion of Basil II, an illuminated manuscript prepared for the emperor Basil II in c. 1000. Public Domain.

INTRODUCTION TO PETER'S FIRST LETTER

During Jesus' ministry, He foretold that His followers would be called upon to endure persecution, and the New Testament indicates that His predictions were fulfilled during the early period of Christian history, as already mentioned in these lessons. However, these persecutions raised a serious problem for the leaders of the early church. The leaders were continually asking: How can the Christian converts be persuaded to stand steady in the face of such appalling conditions and not abandon their faith? What can be done to strengthen wavering Christians? It was in an effort to solve this problem that several New Testament books were written. Two of these books will now be considered.

Peter, accompanied by Silvanus (Silas) and Mark, arrived at Rome about A.D. 62, and suffered martyrdom in that city about A.D. 67. Shortly before his martyrdom, Peter dispatched an important letter to the Christian groups in Asia Minor. This letter is now known as the First Epistle of Peter. It was written in Greek by Silvanus, from the Aramaic dictation of Peter—the word Babylon, of course, indicating the city of Rome, where the Epistle was probably written. (See I Pet. 5:12-13.) The main purpose of the Epistle was to

strengthen the faith of the Christian converts, and to encourage them to hold steady in face of the severe persecutions. The writer placed emphasis on several important points.

First: The converts were to regard persecution as a cleansing process, such as was used to refine precious metals; for this would eventually work out to their advantage. They were to recognize that they were "born anew . . . to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you" (I Pet. 1:3-4). But in the meantime they would be called upon "to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold . . . may redound to praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:6-7).

Second: Converts were also to remember that they had an important mission to fulfill, and for this purpose they had been richly endowed by God. "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Pet. 2:9). God had given them a special revelation and even in face of this persecution, they must fulfill their mission.

Third: Converts were enjoined to rejoice in their sufferings, and to regard persecution as a privilege. Did not Christ suffer? In their sufferings they were sharing in the experiences of their Lord. "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed" (I Pet. 4:12-13).

Fourth: Converts were further encouraged to hold steady in times of persecution by repeated assurances regarding the return of the Lord. Persecution would endure only for a brief period, and then the Lord would set all things right. "The end of all things is at hand" (I Pet. 4:7); "And when the chief Shepherd is manifested you will obtain the unfading crown of glory" (I Pet. 5:4); "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace . . . will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you" (I Pet. 5:10).


In addition to the above, Peter also called upon the converts to conduct all their daily activities in accord with Christian principles. It will be noted that Peter's instructions are couched in terms of apostolic authority. Apparently he recognized that the Christian life would form the best answer to all accusations directed against the Christians. Moreover, the example thus set might be the means of winning many further converts to Christianity, even from the ranks of their persecutors!


Metaphysical Notes: Metaphysically, Peter symbolizes the spiritual faculty of faith, as was explained in the first lesson of this series. Faith has been defined as "the perceiving power of the mind," or that deep inner knowing which enables us to recognize reality, despite appearances. However, in the Epistles of Peter, most references to faith also indicate what may be termed a loving, wholehearted trust in Jesus Christ. Christians were urged to rely upon His ability to strengthen and sustain them, and to bring them safely through every trial or difficulty that might arise. Two important aspects of faith are especially stressed in the First and Second Epistles of Peter.

First: Faith as an Antidote for Fear. This aspect of faith is brought out very clearly in the First Epistle of Peter. During the early days of the persecutions, the Christians were beset by fears of many kinds, for at any moment they might be arrested, tortured, and put to death. The writer of this Epistle assured them that they would be "guarded through faith"; and he further promised them that "as the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls" (II Pet. 1:5-9). This makes stirring reading. When studying such passages, the student should recognize that while these assurances were originally given to the early church, they have present-day application. Times and circumstances may have changed, but faith still remains as a most effective antidote for fear.

Second: Faith as a Sustaining Power. As already noted. Second Peter was written when Christians were becoming wearied with their long waiting for the return of the Lord. Many of them had become quite discouraged, and were about to give up. Therefore the writer of Second Peter sought to encourage the Christians to hold on just a little longer, for the Lord would surely appear. In this effort, the writer pointed out that if faith was to accomplish its sustaining work, it must be strengthened and enriched; and then he gave what may be termed seven important steps for the development of faith. He urged the Christians to “make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.” He then assured them that “if you do this you will never fall,” and “there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (II Pet. 1:5-11).

It should be noted that all these encouraging words were addressed to “those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (II Pet. 1:1). This would indicate that, as well as meeting the needs of the hard-pressed Christians of the early church, the teaching also has present-day application. We may strengthen our faith by following the seven steps indicated above. In this way faith will become a great sustaining power to uphold us at all times, no matter how difficult the situation nor how hard pressed we may be. Faith will sustain us today, just as it sustained the Christians of the early church. Another New Testament writer gives us the assurance that “this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith” (I John 5:4). The closing admonition in Second Peter forms an appropriate closing for this lesson:

 “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen” (II Pet. 3:18).

 Introduction to *Peter's First Letter* by Herbert J. Hunt, former Dean of Bible Studies for the Unity School of Christianity.

From Simon to Peter. Metaphysically, in consciousness, Peter is our spiritual faculty of faith. In our journey of spiritual transformation, our faith faculty's original nature (name) is that of hearing and receptivity (Simon); we have an ability to discern Truth. But as we follow and are disciplined in the Word of Truth and the Spirit (Jesus), our hearing and receptivity are given a new nature (name), Cephas (Peter), which is Greek for the word rock, and so “our Peter” represents a faith in God that is strong, unwavering, and enduring. This faith is a necessary foundation for the building up of spiritual consciousness, the church of Christ in the individual. Peter (faith) was one of the first disciples that Jesus called. Faith is one of the first spiritual faculties to be called into expression by everyone who would follow Jesus in the overcoming life. (MBD/Peter)

The significance of our faith (Peter). The central theme of the message and lessons of both First & Second Peter is faith; as if Peter is writing about the importance of Peter! A metaphysical view of these Letters is a revelation of how faith works in and through our soul and opens the way for the Christ consciousness to be established therein. Faith is the key that opens the door of the kingdom of the heavens within us.

Summary overview of 1st Peter. Our faith (Peter) writes to remind us of three key themes:

1. Suffering will happen, therefore, practice separation (denials) from the continuous stream of thoughts, appearances, and conditions manifesting outside and within us (in this life we are strangers and aliens in a foreign land);
2. Your true identity ... you are a child of God and your true home is in the Presence of God (affirmations);
3. A life of holiness & submission ... remain committed to a life of inner and outer steadfastness, holiness, submissive willingness, and perseverance, that you may be

able to cultivate a state of consciousness receptive to the Truth and Spirit, thus ensuring your spiritual progress (meditation/prayer, waiting for and obeying your Inner Guidance).

Our faith would remind us to desire and effort to cultivate holiness and faith in God's Word and Spirit, Power and Presence, for this is the way by which we are able to face any adversity (adversarial thoughts or conditions) along our journey.

 Introduction to *Peter's First Letter* by Mary Salama.

FIRST PETER 1

Let Your Faith Arise

^{1:1} Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ^{1:2} according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood: ¹ Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

1. *Be sprinkled with His blood.* The life contained in God's Word. Therefore, it is spiritual energy that purifies and redeems man by pouring into his life currents a new and purer stream. This divine energy cleanses the consciousness of dead works to enable man to serve the living God (RW/blood of Christ)

A Living Hope

^{1:3} Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy became our father again to a living hope ¹ through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ^{1:4} to an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that doesn't fade away, reserved in Heaven for you, ^{1:5} who by the power of God are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ^{1:6} Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been put to grief in various trials, ^{1:7} that the proof of your faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ-- ^{1:8} whom not having known you love; in whom, though now you don't see him, yet believing, you rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory-- ^{1:9} receiving the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ^{1:11} searching for who or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed to, ² when he predicted the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that would follow them. ^{1:12} To them it was revealed, that not to themselves, but to you, they ministered these things, which now have been announced to you through those who preached the Good News to you by the Holy Spirit sent out from heaven; which things angels desire to look into.

1. *A living hope.* Hope is the expectation of good in the future. It is a quality (good as far as it goes) of sense mind because it is subject to time. Faith is the certain knowledge that our good is ours right now. It is of God; it goes beyond time and space (RW/hope). Both faith and hope spring up spontaneously in our heart on contemplation of Christ Jesus. [In the Hebrew, "hope" has several meanings, including "wait expectantly; be patient; sink down; twist together; to loose; a cord or rope." Thus we can say that to have "a living hope" is to maintain a state of consciousness that expects the good, is pa-

^{1:10} Concerning this salvation, the

tient, is willing to loosen from self-reasonings, sink down, and "stay roped" to the Truth.]

2. *Who or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed to.* [Metaphysically, salvation is always imminent.] From the spiritual viewpoint there is no such thing as time in the way that man has come to regard it. With God a thousand years are as one day and one day is as a thousand years. ... People have gone insane ... trying to

calculate by literal interpretation of Scripture the date on which the world would come to an end, not discerning the spiritual meaning of these writings. All this comes from believing man's idea of time to be a reality. Eternity is not an endless number of years, and things that are spiritual and eternal cannot be measured by days and months and years. (MBD/time).

Holiness and Purity Metaphysically Understood

^{1:13} Therefore, prepare your minds for action,[1] be sober and set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ-- ^{1:14} as children of obedience, not conforming yourselves according to your former lusts as in your ignorance, ^{1:15} but just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior; ^{1:16} because it is written, "You shall be holy; for I am holy." [2]

^{1:17} If you call on him as Father, ² who without respect of persons judges according to each man's work, pass the time of your living as foreigners here in reverent fear: ^{1:18} knowing that you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from the useless way of life handed down from your fathers, ^{1:19} but with precious blood, as of a faultless and pure lamb, the blood of Christ; ^{1:20} who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of times for your sake, ^{1:21} who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God.

^{1:22} Seeing you have purified your souls ⁴ in your obedience to the truth through the Spirit in sincere brotherly affection, love one another from the heart fervently: ⁵ ^{1:23} having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, ⁶ through the word of God, which lives and remains forever. ^{1:24} For,

"All flesh is like grass,
and all of man's glory like the flower
in the grass.

The grass withers, and its flower falls;
but the Lord's word endures
forever." [3]

This is the word of Good News which was preached to you.

1. *Just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior.* We must develop single-mindedness, must think creatively or constructively (gird up the loins of his mind), must be earnest in his work (be sober) and must keep his thoughts on what he wishes to accomplish. [We know we can] become one with the Divine, as Jesus was because the Christ is revealed to us as an indwelling presence, in whom there is a union of love, wisdom, power, faith, and prescience that can cause the divine to be manifested in us, as we faithfully express it.

2. *If you call on him as Father.* While it is true that God, Divine mind, the principle of life, law, is no respecter of persons, we turn to Him as to a father, because through His Son Jesus Christ we are assured that in His love and wisdom He looks beyond our imperfections and sees us as His sons.

3. *Living as foreigners here in reverent fear.* What fear, if any, is legitimate for us to entertain? We should never surrender to fear. However, in taking thought for our progress in understanding we may consider the fear of falling short in our realization legitimate, since it spurs us on to renewed efforts to realize the Christ.

4. *Seeing you have purified your souls.* The deep purity and mighty strength of the Christ Mind are made manifest in us as we develop spiritually. Instead of consciously and unconsciously tempting one another in sense ways, these qualities in each will incite in others holy aspirations to fulfill the law of righteousness (RW/purity of the Christ Mind).

5. *Love one another from the heart fervently.* The greatest power that man wields is the power of love, a faculty of both mind and heart. Until he learns the lesson of disinterested service to his fellow men (unfeigned love of the brethren), he cannot express the Christ love in its strength and purity.

6. *Not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible.* The corruptible body is that which is subject to decay. When it is transformed into the spiritual body, it becomes incorruptible and is forever enduring (RW/corruptible). See "This corruptible must put on incorruption" (I Cor. 15:53).

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[1] v1:13. literally, "gird up the waist of your mind"

[2] v1:16. Leviticus 11:44-45

[3] v1:25. Isaiah 40:6-8

FIRST PETER 2

You are a Living Stone!

^{2:1} Putting away therefore all wickedness, all deceit, hypocrisies, envies, and all evil speaking, ^{2:2} as newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the Word, ¹ that you may grow thereby, ^{2:3} if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious: ² ^{2:4} coming to him, a living stone, ³ rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, precious. ^{2:5} You also, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house, ⁴ to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ^{2:6} Because it is contained in Scripture,

"Behold, I lay in Zion a chief
cornerstone, chosen, and precious:
He who believes in him will not be
disappointed." [4]

^{2:7} For you who believe therefore is the honor, but for those who are disobedient,

"The stone which the builders rejected,
has become the chief cornerstone," [5]

^{2:8} and,

"a stone of stumbling, and a rock of
offense." [6]

For they stumble at the word, being disobedient, to which also they were appointed. ^{2:9} But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for

God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: ^{2:10} who in time past were no people, but now are God's people, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

1. *as newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the Word.* When the true light from Heaven shines into the consciousness, the soul instinctively turns away from all thought of evil, and, as naturally as a newborn babe, demands its milk.

2. *if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* One of the first signs that the soul has tasted of the true fruits of Spirit is the tendency to affirm the enduring goodness of Spirit. Such affirmations broaden, deepen, and strengthen our nature so that shortcomings in others are readily overlooked; forgiveness, grace, and mercy are exercised towards the undeserving; generosity flows forth [effortlessly]; we bless and become a blessing to all, and we even seek the highest possible good of the offender.

3. *coming to Him, a living stone.* This stone refers to the indwelling Christ, which is the keystone of our character (MBD/stone), and it is upon this pure understanding (white stone) that we are to build up and develop our true Christ self (RW/stone).

4. *built up as a spiritual house.* Each member of the church is a "living stone" in the spiritual house of God. According to the measure that we "live the life," we are elect and precious in the sight of God. To the extent that we make spiritual sacrifices for humanity's sake [and for the sake of our own spiritual progress], so also in that same degree we open the way to receive the rich gifts of the [Presence and Power of God].

Practicing Truth is True Freedom

^{2:11} Beloved, I beg you as foreigners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts,^① which war against the soul; ^{2:12} having good behavior among the nations, so in that of which they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they see, glorify God in the day of visitation. ^{2:13} Therefore subject yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake:^② whether to the king, as supreme; ^{2:14} or to governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to those who do well. ^{2:15} For this is the will of God, that by well-doing you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:^③ ^{2:16} as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bondservants of God.^④ ^{2:17} Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

1. *as foreigners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts.* Our Spirit-led will (Paul) makes this request of us, for it is through our clean living that we keep our own soul in peace, as well as protect others, who may judge our faith by our outer expressions and may be influenced by those expressions, for either good or evil.

2. *subject yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.* Our ultimate allegiance is to Truth, and our sense of responsibility to it binds us to observe the rules of good citizenship. Each individual realizes within himself freedom to obey of his own volition the commands of his worldly superiors freedom to honor others, to love those of like mind with himself; to "fear God" (or understand the inevitability of divine law), and to "honor the king" (or render due respect to those in authority over him). It is right for the individual not to waste his energies in futile opposition. He should put them forth where their weight will be felt. When an order is established, the individual only upsets himself by struggling alone to overturn it. He who stands alone should keep himself at peace with others.

3. *by well-doing you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.* Each of us may silence their own ignorance by well-doing and gaining wisdom in making a study of their own form of expression; this is the better use of our energies.

4. *as bondservants of God.* "Bondservants of God" are they whose conscience holds them to the right course of conduct; these are the freest of all people since the bonds are within their own consciences. Our ultimate allegiance is to Truth, and our sense of responsibility to it binds us to observe the rules of good citizenship.

A Household Code for Attaining Glory and Patience^①

^{2:18} Servants, be in subjection to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the wicked. ^{2:19} For it is commendable if someone endures pain, suffering unjustly, because of conscience toward God. ^{2:20} For what glory is it if, when you sin, you patiently endure beating? But if, when you do well, you patiently endure suffering,^② this is commendable with God. ^{2:21} For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you[7] an example, that you should follow his steps,^③ ^{2:22} who did not sin, "neither was deceit found in his mouth."^[8] ^{2:23} Who, when he was cursed, didn't curse back. When he suffered, didn't threaten, but committed himself to him who judges righteously; ^{2:24} who his own self bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed. ^{2:25} For you were going astray like sheep; but now have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer^[9] of your souls.^④

1. *Household Code.* A social media meme which encouraged Stoicism for keeping a peaceful order in Roman and Greek households. Later inserted in Christian scripture to defend the Jesus movement from pagan criticism of disorderly egalitarianism. See metaphysical interpretations at Ephesians 5:22-6:9, Colossians 3:18-4:1, Titus 2:1-10 and 1 Peter 2:18-3:1-8.

2. *glory is . . . patiently endure suffering.* This is the same as Jesus' teaching of the "second mile," namely, that we should be willing to do more than could humanly be asked or expected of us in order to prove our claim to the divine nature. Patience that has its roots in principle does not break, when one bears undeserved suffering.

3. *For to this you were called . . . follow His steps.* When we choose to follow our inner Christ, like Jesus, we must expect that the path of proving our allegiance to Principle will take us through tests of various kinds; Spiritual strength and transmutation are not demonstrated otherwise.

4. *now have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your soul.* The Holy Spirit of God is the One, True Shepherd of our souls. We find our way back to the kingdom and to our Shepherd by keeping our minds open and obedient to this pure Spirit life,

and by keeping our consciousness free from all guilt and guile.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama and Mark Hicks.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[4] v2:6. Isaiah 28:16

[5] v2:7. Psalm 118:22

[6] v2:8. Isaiah 8:14

[7] v2:21. TR reads "us" instead of "you"

[8] v2:22. Isaiah 53:9

[9] v2:25. "Overseer" is from the Greek episkopon, which can mean overseer, curator, guardian, or superintendent.

FIRST PETER 3

Wives and Husbands, Metaphysically Understood¹

^{3:1} In like manner, wives,² be in subjection to your own husbands; so that, even if any don't obey the Word, they may be won by the behavior of their wives without a word; ^{3:2} seeing your pure behavior in fear. ^{3:3} Let your beauty be not just the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on fine clothing; ^{3:4} but in the hidden person of the heart, in the incorruptible adornment of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God very precious. ^{3:5} For this is how the holy women before, who hoped in God also adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: ^{3:6} as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose children you now are, if you do well, and are not put in fear by any terror.

^{3:7} You husbands, in like manner, live with your wives according to knowledge,³ giving honor to the woman, as to the weaker vessel, as being also joint heirs of the grace of life; that your prayers may not be hindered.

1. A continuation of the Household code explained in the previous chapter.

2. *wives*. Taking a wife represents a unification of the I AM with the affections (RW/wife).

3. *husbands . . . live with your wives according to knowledge*. Spiritually, marriage represents the union of two dominant states of consciousness. When we open the door of the mind by consciously affirming the presence and power of the divine I AM in our midst, there is a marriage or union of the higher forces in being with the lower and we find that we are quickened in every part; the life of the I AM has been poured out for us (RW/marriage).

Suffering for Doing Right

^{3:8} Finally, be all like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous, ^{3:9} not rendering evil for evil,¹ or reviling for reviling; but instead blessing; knowing that to this were

you called, that you may inherit a blessing.²
^{3:10} For,

"He who would love life,
and see good days,

let him keep his tongue from evil,
and his lips from speaking deceit.
3:11 Let him turn away from evil, and do good.
Let him seek peace, and pursue it.
3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears open to their prayer;
but the face of the Lord³ is against those who do evil."^[10]

3:13 Now who is he who will harm you, if you become imitators of that which is good? 3:14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "Don't fear what they fear, neither be troubled."^[11] 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, with humility and fear: 3:16 having a good conscience;⁴ that, while you are spoken against as evildoers, they may be disappointed who curse your good manner of life in Christ. 3:17 For it is better, if it is God's will, that you suffer for doing well⁵ than for doing evil. 3:18 Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 3:19 in which he also went and preached to the spirits in prison, 3:20 who before were disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ship was being built. In it, few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 3:21 This is a symbol of baptism, which now saves you--not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 3:22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, angels and

authorities and powers being made subject to him.

1. not rendering evil for evil. Compared to our higher, spiritual-self, our personal-self reacts--both to others as well as to our own selves--directly, returning good for good, evil for evil. Only as our understanding of Principle, our love of Divine rightness, and our desire to spiritually transform grow and increase, will we be able to respond to negativity (our own and others') with Truth and love. Blessing evil is more successful than fighting it. Jesus proved this to be true by befriending publicans and sinners and converting them to right living.

2. that you may inherit a blessing. Unless we acknowledge blessings we remain unconscious of them, and so we miss the joy they are capable of affording us. In accordance with the law that we reap as we have sown, we "inherit" the blessing that we bestow. By blessing our circumstances regardless what they may be, and by blessing others regardless of their attitude, we set in motion the causes that bring blessings into our own life. Doing good brings good to us in the form of a mind that is at ease, a good conscience, and an untroubled outlook on life.

3. the eyes, ears, face of the Lord. The "Lord" is the omnipotent I AM. The "eyes of the Lord" and "His ears" are the perceptive powers of the I AM, which know and perceive our right motives, thoughts, and acts. The "face of the Lord" is the awareness of the I AM principle, which embraces the Divine both within us and within our environments.

4. having a good conscience. A good (guilt-free) conscience is a great blessing because it creates constructive effects in our life, instead of accumulating negations to be overcome.

5. It is better . . . that you suffer for doing well. The joy and good conscience that come from well-doing are a reward in and of themselves, and that even though we may experience suffering, this suffering cannot reduce or destroy these inner rewards. On the other hand, evil (acting against our own good conscience) inflicts its own penalty, so that when we suffer for evil-doing, we are in fact doubly punished.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama and Mark Hicks.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[10] v3:12. Psalm 34:12-16

[11] v3:14. Isaiah 8:12

FIRST PETER 4

Practice Living Differently

^{4:1} Forasmuch then as Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind; ¹ for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin; ^{4:2} that you no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ^{4:3} For we have spent enough of our past time doing the desire of the Gentiles, ² and having walked in lewdness, lusts, drunken binges, orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries. ^{4:4} They think it is strange that you don't run with them into the same excess of riot, blaspheming: ^{4:5} who will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ³ ^{4:6} For to this end the Good News was preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed as men in the flesh, but live as to God in the spirit.

^{4:7} But the end of all things is near. ⁴ Therefore be of sound mind, self-controlled, and sober in prayer. ^{4:8} And above all things be earnest in your love among yourselves, for love covers a multitude of sins. ^{4:9} Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ^{4:10} As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms. ^{4:11} If anyone speaks, let it be as it were the very words of God. If anyone serves, let it be as of the strength which God supplies, that in all things God may

be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1. *arm yourselves also with the same mind.* The greatest discovery of any age is the power of thought. Thought is that process in mind by which substance is acted upon by energy directed by intelligence. Thus three factors are involved in every thought: substance, energy, intelligence. Spirit is not thought, but lies back of thought. Thought is the first emanation of Spirit. Thought is movement of ideas in mind. One of the laws of thought is that of like attracting like. "Birds of a feather flock together." So kindred thoughts gravitate together by a law Divine and universal.

2. *the desire of the Gentiles.* There are many thought atmospheres in this realm in which we live. Two grand divisions are recognized by Christian writers: the Gentile thought and the Israel thought. The Gentile thought is the outer, the senses, and the Israel thought the inner, the spiritual.

3. *to judge the living and the dead.* The "dead" are those thoughts unconscious of Truth. The "living" are those thoughts just awakened, but not fully enlightened. The "judge" is Truth itself, with which every thought in consciousness must align and harmonize.

4. *the end of all things is near.* This is the dissolution in mind of that realm that believes in the reality of material things and conditions. When the Truth enters the consciousness, a great change begins in our viewpoint. The reality of body and its environments gradually dissolves in thought and we see the end of earth. Then our minds become truly sound, and we are sober and prayerful.

Recycle Your Suffering!

^{4:12} Beloved, don't be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you, ¹ to test you, as though a strange thing happened to you. ^{4:13} But because you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation ² of his glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy. ^{4:14} If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed; ³ because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. On their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified. ^{4:15} For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or

an evil doer, or a meddler in other men's matters. ^{4:16} But if one of you suffers for being a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this matter. ^{4:17} For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins first with us, what will happen to those who don't obey the Good News of God? ^{4:18} "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner?" [12] ^{4:19} Therefore let them also who suffer according to the will of God in doing good

entrust their souls to him, as to a faithful Creator.

1. *don't be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you.* All adverse experiences come about under law. In the light of cause and effect, nothing is strange or mysterious; everything is understandable. On the positive note, smooth sailing leaves our faith untried, tending it to become inactive from disuse, thus, challenges, when faced aright, strengthen and arouse our faith to its highest pitch of effectiveness.

2. *rejoice ... at the revelation.* To suffer as a Christian means that when we find ourselves reaping the fruit of error, we study to understand the inner cause. Instead of holding others responsible for what has happened to us, we use suffering

to clarify our understanding of the Law and we affix the lesson in our subconsciousness through the heightened emotion thus aroused, so that we may not have to repeat the experience.

3. *If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed.* Why? Because such occasions are powerful opportunities for our transmutation. We are blessed because we are being given an opportunity to subordinate our individual will to the general good, to affirm the Truth we know (that God uses all things for good, that God is faithful, etc.), to practice concentrating our thoughts on the love and power of God that is at work in us and through us, and because such insults are living proof that the Spirit of the Christ is ascending in us!

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[12] v4:18. Proverbs 11:31

FIRST PETER 5

Are You Tending Your Flock of Thoughts?

^{5:1} I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and who will also share in the glory that will be revealed. ^{5:2} Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, not for dishonest gain, but willingly; ^{5:3} neither as lording it over those entrusted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. ^{5:4} When the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the crown of glory that doesn't fade away.

^{5:5} Likewise, you younger ones, be subject to the elder. ^{5:6} Yes, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to subject yourselves to one another; for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." [13] ^{5:7} Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, ^{5:8} that he may exalt you in due time; ^{5:9} casting all your worries ^{5:10} on him, because he cares for you.

^{5:8} Be sober and self-controlled. ^{5:9} Be watchful. Your adversary the devil, walks around like a roaring lion, ^{5:10} seeking whom he may devour. ^{5:11} Withstand him steadfast in your faith, knowing that your brothers who are in the world are undergoing the same sufferings. ^{5:12} But may the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. ^{5:13} To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

1. *be subject to the elder.* The "elder" we are to be subject to and obey is Christ; our One Master, Teacher, and Lord. And we must "gird ourselves with humility" because humility is essential to Chris-likeness.

2. *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God.* Try to align ourselves with the Divine Law so as to express the wisdom, love, and power of the Holy Spirit. We are not to follow our personal leading but to depend on Divine leading.

3. *casting all your worries.* In order to cast all our

anxiety upon God we need faith (Peter). Faith gives us the courage to meet life in a serene spirit, knowing that whatever may come, we shall be able to extract good from the experience by meeting it in the name and through the power of Jesus Christ.

4. *Be sober and self-controlled. Be watchful.* These inner states are to be applied over of our own thoughts and tendencies rather than upon others. Caring about and watchfulness over our inner life is the “shepherding of our flock” and is consistent with casting all our care or anxiety upon God, grow-

ing in us a faith to trust Divine Mind to be equal to our emergencies.

5. *a roaring lion.* The adversarial devil that “walks around like a roaring lion” is doing so, first and foremost, in our consciousness. This “lion” is anything that seeks to and succeeds at weakening our faith in the good. As seekers of spiritual transmutation, we must guard against anything that would “devour the Truth” from us, and so we must, at all times, remain mentally sober, self-controlled, watchful, and

Greet States of Babel With a Kiss of Love

^{5:12} Through Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.

^{5:13} She who is in Babylon, ¹ chosen together with you, greets you; and so does Mark, my son. ^{5:14} Greet one another with a kiss of love. ² Peace be to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

1. See

2. *she who is in Babylon.* To be “in Babylon” is to be in a state of confusion or mixture. Whether on the level of the outer physical, the senses, or

on the mental/consciousness, Babylon is a chaotic condition. There are times when we find ourselves in the confusion of the senses and its thoughts are so strong that they seem to have us in complete subjugation. Such cases symbolize captivity in Babylon. (MBD/Babylon)

3. *Greet one another with a kiss of love.* [To kiss is “to put together; to touch gently; to handle; to be equipped with,” and so a kiss represents the concept of “fastening together or arranging things in order”. Such a “contemplative kissing” practice also has the added benefit of building up our faith (Peter) that we may more easily greet every arising past memory, current circumstance, and future longing with a kiss.]

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[13] v5:5. Proverbs 3:34

APPENDICES

**FILLMORE
STUDY
BIBLE**

Peter's First Letter

Metaphysically Interpreted

The Fillmore Study Bible provides the reader with an introduction to metaphysical Bible interpretation by offering annotations and commentary from the works of Charles Fillmore and other metaphysical Christians that were published between 1895 and 1965.

Many Bible students learn their theology by reading the annotations and commentary of study Bibles. These study Bibles have a theological point of view, typically Catholic, Evangelical or Mainline Protestant. The Fillmore Study Bible makes this method of study available to the Metaphysical Christian.

The Fillmore Bible Society are collaborators who comb through dozens of metaphysical books written by Charles Fillmore and his students as well as over 70 years of Fillmore articles and sermons for metaphysical insights into the Bible.

Nearly all the New Testament writings are available online. Print editions of individual books, like this one, are being released as they become available. The society's focus in 2023 is publishing a complete New Testament edition and the start of selected Old Testament books. The society welcomes new collaborators in this ongoing project.



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